develop normally.

Babies with Congenital Hypothyroidism can grow and develop just like other babies with a little extra care.

For more information, please contact:
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Division of Women and Children's Services
Box 101106
Columbia, SC 29211
(803) 898-0767
or
your county health department

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Division of Women and Children's Services

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NEWBORN SCREENING 2

What You Should Know When a Second Test for Congenital Hypothyroidism Is Needed

Newborn Screening

A small sample of your baby's blood was collected soon after birth and was sent to the DHEC laboratory for testing. This testing is called Newborn Screening. In SC, newborns are tested for several genetic and chemical disorders. These disorders include Phenylketonuria (called PKU), Congenital Hypothyroidism, Galactosemia, Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (called CAH), Medium Chain Acyl Co-A Dehydrogenase Deficiency (called MCADD), and Hemoglobinopathies. In some cases, a second test is needed to help your doctor decide if your baby has one of these disorders. In many cases, the second test will be normal. However, if your baby does have one of the newborn screening disorders, early treatment will give him or her the best chance to grow up healthy.

Congenital Hypothyroidism

Your baby's first test showed that he or she could possibly have Congenital Hypothyroidism. Here's a brief description of this disorder and how it is treated.

Congenital Hypothyroidism is a disorder that is found in around one of every 4,000 babies born each year. Most types of Congenital Hypothyroidism are not genetic. This means that it is not passed to the baby from the mother and father's genes.

When a baby has Congenital Hypothyroidism, he or she cannot produce enough of a chemical (called a hormone) in the thyroid gland. The thyroid hormone is needed to keep the body's systems working like they should.

This usually happens because the thyroid gland did not grow properly while the baby was still in the mother's womb.

If he or she is not treated, the baby's brain will not develop properly, causing mental retardation. A baby who doesn't have enough thyroid hormone can also have growth problems.

Fortunately, treatment for Congenital Hypothyroidism is fairly simple. Treatment involves giving the baby a medication to make up for the thyroid hormone his or her body cannot produce. The baby will need to take this medication for the rest of his or her life.

Newborn screening allows the baby's doctor to tell if the baby has Congenital Hypothyroidism before it causes irreversible damage to his or her brain. This lets the doctor give the parents special instructions on how to help the baby grow and